

**BROWN COUNTY FIRE INVESTIGATION TASK FORCE
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

AGENDA

A meeting of the General Membership will be held on Thursday, December 2, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at Bellevue Fire Station #1, 3100 Eaton Road, Green Bay, WI.

- ITEM #1. Adoption of Agenda.
- ITEM #2. Review Minutes of Previous Meeting.
- ITEM #3. Report of Task Force Activities.
- ITEM #4. Information from Board of Directors Meeting.
- ITEM #5. Old Business.
- ITEM #6. New Business.
- ITEM #7. Juvenile Firesetter Business.
- ITEM #8. Other Business.
- ITEM #9. Set Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting.
- ITEM #10. Training.

The BCFITF General Membership welcomes anyone interested in becoming a member. **Please post for your fellow firefighters and officers to read.**

Brad Muller
President, BCFITF General Membership

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY FIRE INVESTIGATION TASK FORCE

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

A meeting of the General Membership of the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force was held on September 2, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at Ashwaubenon Fire Station #1 located at 2155 Holmgren Way, Green Bay, WI.

Present: Steve Zich, Joe Gabe, Tom Hendricks, Randy Lind, Dan Kerkhoff, Kevin Tielens, Glenn Deviley, Angie Cali, Dave Seidl, Terry Rottier, Brad Muller, Doug Peters, Lance Catalano, Kyle Lauf

Item #1. Adoption of Agenda.

Motion was made by Kerkhoff and seconded by Gabe to adopt the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Item #2. Review Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Motion was made by Hendricks and seconded by Deviley to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Motion carried.**

Item #3. Report of Task Force Activities.

Muller reported that the Fire Investigation Task Force was called out to the following fires since the last meeting:

05-29-10 361 Southern Star Lane, De Pere (residence/accidental)
06-16-10 436 Henry Rd., Hobart (duplex/accidental)
06-28-10 459 N. St. Bernard Dr., De Pere (accidental)
07-12-10 200 Elizabeth St., Green Bay (storage bldg./undetermined)
07-18-10 1399 S. Michiels Rd., New Franken (undetermined)
08-21-10 855 S. Ridge Rd., Green Bay (two-family residence/arson)

Item #4. Information from Board of Directors Meeting.

The next meeting is September 16, 2010. The updated bylaws will be on the agenda for approval.

Item #5. Old Business.

Give any ideas for new equipment to Muller and training ideas to Deviley. Annual \$5 dues pay to Davidson. Let Muller know if you have an e-mail or phone number change.

Muller reminded everyone that the Board of Directors would like to see everyone take the IAAI certification class.

Item #6. New Business.

Muller reported that the new truck committee met and that a form letter will be sent to businesses requesting donations. He also stated that he will check to see if the county will match funds once we get some donations. He also mentioned that the short in the truck was fixed and the water pump replaced.

Item #7. Juvenile Firesetter Business.

Nick Craig was not present.

Item #8. Other Matters.

No other matters were discussed.

Item #9. Set Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting.

The next meeting is set for December 2, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at Bellevue Fire Station #1, 3100 Eaton Road, Green Bay, WI.

Item #10. Training.

Training consisted of going over the new fire investigation forms. Scott Tebo, the IAAI area training director, also gave a talk.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Laurent
Recording Secretary



BYLAWS

REV. 7/10

I. NAME.

This organization shall be known as the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force, which shall consist of the Board of Directors and the General Membership. The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force shall be abbreviated to BCFITF in the remainder of the Bylaws.

II. OBJECTIVES.

- A. Stimulate cooperation of efforts among interested groups and organizations in relation to arson prevention and detection.
- B. Improve control, detection, and prevention of arson for profit.
- C. Promote educational programs to the general public, insurance personnel, and local authorities as to arson problems and implications.
- D. Adopt guidelines as to when and how the fire investigation unit will be called out to assist individual departments in conducting their investigations.

III. MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS.

- A. There shall be a board of 17 directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of the sheriff of Brown County, district attorney of Brown County, Green Bay police chief, Green Bay fire chief, De Pere police chief, De Pere fire chief, Ashwaubenon Public Safety director, Allouez fire chief, Howard fire chief, a rural fire chief as designated by the Brown County Fire Chiefs Association, director of the Brown County Communications Center, a representative from NWTC fire training, a member of the insurance industry whose main duties are fire loss-related, and a member of the general public whose training and interests are in arson investigation. The president and treasurer of the General Membership shall be voting members of the Board of Directors. The Juvenile Firesetter Program coordinator shall be a voting member of the Board of Directors. A representative of DCI shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.
- B. There shall be a General Membership which shall be open to membership by Brown County: Law enforcement, firefighters, insurance company representatives, and fire marshal's office, for those who are interested in arson prevention and control. Each member must complete a membership application and have it signed by two members in good standing. The Board of Directors shall approve membership applications.

IV. VOTING.

Voting on issues at regular meetings will be authorized if a simple majority of the standing members are present and vote. The same simple majority will be needed for

election of officers. The list of standing members of the Board of Directors is in Section III of these Bylaws.

If a person is designated by a standing member to attend the meeting for that person, that person is qualified to vote for that standing member.

If there are less members present at a meeting than a simple majority of the standing members, the meeting will be an informational meeting and no voting will be valid.

V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS.

The Board of Directors will elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson who are elected by a simple majority of the Board of Directors.

CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson of the Board of Directors shall call meetings of the Board of Directors periodically to handle the business of BCFITF. He/She shall run the Board of Directors meetings and submit an agenda to the members in writing at least eight (8) days prior to the meeting.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The vice-chairperson of the Board of Directors shall run the meetings of the Board of Directors in the absence of the chairperson. He/She will handle other duties as delegated by the chairperson.

TREASURER

The treasurer of the Board of Directors shall be the office manager of the Brown County Sheriff's Department. He/She will maintain records of disbursements from the budgeting amount for BCFITF that is in the sheriff's budget for the fiscal year.

SECRETARY

The secretary of the Board of Directors will be the person supplied by the Brown County Sheriff's Department. He/She will be the recording secretary for the Board of Directors meetings. He/She will maintain a current roster of the Board of Directors.

VI. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT

The president shall call meetings of the General Membership at least three (3) times a year. He/She will try to increase the membership and provide training for the General Membership. He/She will also convey the issues discussed at the Board of Directors

meetings to the General Membership and visa versa. He/She will also serve as the BCFITF coordinator. He/She will be a member of the Board of Directors during his/her term of office and will attend the regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

VICE-PRESIDENT

The vice-president will run the meetings of the General Membership in the absence of the president. He/She will also handle other duties delegated by the president. He/She is in charge of the training for the General Membership meetings.

TREASURER

The treasurer will handle the fiscal duties of the General Membership and the Brown County fire safety house funds. He/She will run the meetings of the General Membership in the absence of the president and vice-president. He/She will also maintain a current roster of the General Membership. He/She will be a member of the Board of Directors during his/her term of office and will attend the regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

SECRETARY

The secretary of the General Membership will be the person supplied by the Brown County Sheriff's Department. He/She will be the recording secretary for the General Membership meetings. He/She will maintain a current roster of the General Membership.

VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The Board of Directors officers shall hold office for a term of two years. The officers shall be elected at the September/October meeting of the Board of Directors in the odd years. They will be elected by a majority of the members present at the meeting.

The General Membership officers shall be elected at the September/October meeting every other year as set by the present officers. They will be elected by the majority of the members present at that meeting and will serve a two-year term.

VIII. NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

The Board of Directors will appoint a nominating committee who will serve unless or until they resign or are replaced by the Board of Directors. The nominating committee will poll all the members of the Board of Directors to find a slate of candidates prior to the September/October meeting in the odd years at which time election will be held.

The president will appoint a nominating committee. The nominating committee shall nominate a slate of candidates for office to be voted on at the September/October meeting. In the event of vacancies during the year, a replacement or replacements will be

appointed by the Board of Directors to complete the term of office. The nominating committee shall be appointed at the winter General Membership meeting.

IX. MEETINGS.

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held quarterly each year and special meetings can be called at any time. Meetings of the General Membership will be held with their annual meeting in September/October and at least a winter and spring meeting.

X. COMMITTEES.

The Board of Directors shall establish committees from time to time. Members of the various committees shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The committee members do not have to be members of the Board of Directors.

The General Membership shall establish committees from time to time. The members of the various committees shall be appointed by the president.

XI. REPLACEMENT OF OFFICERS FOR VARIOUS REASONS.

Any of the above-listed officers unable to continue their elected duties due to death, illness, or moving away shall be replaced by an election which will take place at the next regularly-scheduled meeting. A majority of the members is necessary to replace the person vacating the office being filled.

In the event the person elected to an office does not perform the necessary duties of the office, the membership can request a recall election. There must first be a petition signed by a majority of the members requesting a recall and approved by the Board of Directors. After this is done, an election will take place at the next meeting of the Board of Directors as to who will be replacing the officer. Members voted must be listed as bona fide members of BCFITF prior to the election.

XII. FULL-TIME MEMBERS OF THE FIRE INVESTIGATION UNIT.

Members of the Fire Investigation Unit:

- 12 investigator slots
- Must be either a full-time police officer or state-certified Firefighter Level II
- Must have completed **Wisconsin 24 hour Cause and Origin** class or equivalent (Board of Directors will determine equivalency)
- May not be a department head and must have a letter of recommendation from their department head
- Members must have at least five (5) years of experience as a police officer or firefighter and must be at least (5) years from normal retirement

Selection:

Three (3) of the 12 positions are reserved for investigators of the Brown County Sheriff's Department. There may not be more than two investigators at any one time from any other single department unless approved by the Board of Directors. When there is a vacancy with that exception, the BCFITF coordinator shall send letters to all Brown County fire chiefs and police chiefs requesting that interested parties submit an application and résumé containing vital information and qualifications. The chief of that department must also submit a letter of support authorizing the participation of that member. The applications will be forwarded to the sheriff for review and background checks. The sheriff will forward the applications to the interview committee of the Board of Directors who will be appointed at each annual election of the Board of Directors and who will make recommendations on replacement(s). Those recommendations will be brought to the Board of Directors for a vote on approval or disapproval. Successful applicants will attend the ensuing Board of Directors meeting to be introduced to the Board of Directors.

XIII. INTERN QUALIFICATIONS.

Intern members shall be:

- Members of fire or police departments
- Members of BCFITF General Membership
- Participate in a minimum of four (4) hours of arson investigation training per year
- Be a state-certified police officer or Firefighter I
- Should be recommended by chief of their department
- There is a limit of 24 interns at one particular time
- A two-year term to allow for new interested interns

XIV. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE BCFITF COORDINATOR/ GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PRESIDENT.

Functions of the BCFITF coordinator/General Membership president include the following:

1. Shall assist in the development of operational procedures for the team to follow and ensure that the procedures and duties are properly completed by team members.
2. Shall review all BCFITF investigations for quality and completeness and ensure that BCFITF investigation reports are completed in a timely fashion and that all reports are filed in a central repository.
3. Shall ensure that the fire chief of the jurisdiction where the fire occurred is promptly advised of the status of the investigation.

4. Shall act as a liaison between BCFITF and the fire chiefs in whose jurisdiction the fire occurred, reviewing and responding to requests for additional services of BCFITF. If additional services are deemed necessary, the BCFITF coordinator will call out the team to reassemble and continue the investigation.
5. Shall provide a status report to the Board of Directors regarding any active investigations or as requested by the Board of Directors. Additionally, the BCFITF coordinator shall respond to the Board of Directors or designated subcommittee regarding any complaints pertaining to BCFITF.
6. Shall ensure the proper care and maintenance of equipment.
7. Shall be an investigator with BCFITF.

XV. TERMINATION/RESIGNATION.

- A. Membership in the General Membership shall be terminated by:
 1. Voluntary withdrawal.
 2. Lack of participation in meetings and training sessions.
 3. Misconduct.
- B. Actions of misconduct, such as, but not limited to, include:
 1. Criminal offenses.
 2. Neglect of duty.
 3. Violations of the Code of Ethics and rules, policies, and procedures of BCFITF.
 4. Falsification or misrepresentation of application or status within the General Membership.
- C. The Board of Directors shall, upon receipt of a complaint against an active member of the General Membership, direct written notice of the allegation(s) to the ethics committee of the Board of Directors.
- D. The ethics committee shall consist of the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Board of Directors and the district attorney of Brown County. Additional members shall include a police chief and a fire chief of the Board of Directors appointed by the chairperson on a case-by-case basis.
- E. The Board of Directors shall acknowledge the findings of the ethics committee with respect to sanctions to be imposed.
- F. Reinstatement. Upon reapplication, a member can be reinstated by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

- G. Upon resignation, a written statement of resignation shall be submitted to the BCFITF coordinator or chairperson of the Board of Directors.

XVI. CODE OF ETHICS.

Below is the adopted Code of Ethics for members of BCFITF.

I will as an arson investigator regard myself as a member of an important and honorable profession.

I will conduct both my personal and official life so as to inspire the confidence of the public.

I will not use my profession and my position of trust for personal advantage or profit.

I will regard my fellow investigators with the same standards as I hold for myself. I will never betray a confidence nor otherwise jeopardize their investigation.

I will regard it my duty to know my work thoroughly. It is my further duty to avail myself of every opportunity to learn more about my profession.

I will share publicity equally with my fellow investigators, whether such publicity is favorable or unfavorable.

I will be loyal to my superiors, to my subordinates, and to the organization I represent.

I will bear in mind always that I am a truth seeker, not a case maker, that it is more important to protect the innocent than to convict the guilty.

XVII. NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.

The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force has a policy whereby there will be no discrimination tolerated as to age, religion, sex, or national origin.

OPERATING GUIDELINES

FOR

BROWN COUNTY

FIRE INVESTIGATION

TASK FORCE

FIRE INVESTIGATION UNIT

I. MEETINGS.

The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator shall schedule regular meetings of the investigative staff for the purpose of information dissemination and training. New equipment and procedures will be reviewed. Past cases will be reviewed and updates as to the status of each case. Off-duty investigators will be able to submit to Brown County for reimbursement. All investigators must maintain an attendance rate of at least 50%.

II. TRAINING.

All investigators shall attend either the IAAI **Basic Investigation** class or the Department of Justice class given each year during the first year on the unit. After this, each investigator shall receive a minimum of 20 hours of training per year. This can be obtained by attending the IAAI conferences, Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force meetings, and courses through the Wisconsin Technical College System that are pertinent to the field of fire and arson investigation. All investigators are encouraged to apply for and attend the National Fire Academy arson investigation course. The long-term goal for all investigators should be to become certified by the IAAI.

III. RESPONSES.

- A. The investigation unit shall be made up of 12 investigators, three (3) of whom shall be from the Brown County Sheriff's Department. The investigators will be paged by the Brown County Dispatch Center. Three (3) investigators shall be assembled for each call.
- B. While acknowledging that the investigators are volunteering their time to be on call, we all asked to be put onto the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force and must, therefore, carry our fair share of the load—this means nights, weekends, holidays, etc. All investigators shall respond to a minimum of 25 percent of the calls when they are paged—meaning actually going out on a call.
- C. When responding on a call, at least one, and preferably all investigators, will respond to the fire investigation unit (AR-80). When the first investigator arrives there, he/she shall notify the Brown County Dispatch Center that he/she is standing by and inquire if any other investigators are responding to the truck. If others are responding, he/she shall wait up to 45 minutes for them to get there, leaving when all have arrived. During this period, the truck should be checked over for equipment, oil, batteries, water, and gas. During this time, the interns should be called to notify them of the call and location. Use the list in the book for accurate record-keeping. Have three (3) interns respond initially, and if the scene warrants, call more after arrival. Investigators shall not respond to calls from departments other than their own unless it is an actual Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force response. If for some reason the Brown County Dispatch Center is unable to contact enough full-time investigators,

use the cell phone to try to contact more on your own. We should try for a minimum of two (2) investigators.

- D. Any investigator who has been drinking any alcoholic beverage within four (4) hours prior to the page or is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage shall not respond on any call. There shall be no smoking in the truck (AR-80) or at the scene of any investigation. This is to prevent any contamination of evidence and for the comfort of others. Smoking is allowed away from the fire scene only.
- E. Investigator and Intern Clothing.
 - 1. All investigators will be offered winter coveralls, summer BDU pants, T-shirt or sweatshirt, boots, gloves, and a helmet.
 - 2. If none of the items in stock fit the investigator, new items will be purchased for him/her.
 - 3. Only investigators will qualify for the above-described items provided by the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force.
 - 4. Each intern must follow the guidelines set by his/her department for what clothing they wear.
 - 5. All investigators and interns will dress appropriately and professionally.
- F. When the investigation is finished, all investigators must fuel the truck and all gas equipment and clean the truck and the equipment, making sure it is in order for the next call.
- G. Investigators and interns shall only respond to an investigation when they have been called. They shall not remain at the scene of an investigation outside of their jurisdiction unless acting in the official capacity as a Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force investigator.

IV. INVESTIGATIONS/PROCEDURES.

- A. The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force should be called out for all fatal fires. The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator will notify DCI of any suspicious fatal fires (unless DCI is called in to assist).
- B. Team Leader. There will be a team leader at each investigation. The team leader will be determined as follows:
 - 1st - Investigator from that agency or jurisdiction
 - 2nd - Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator

3rd - Most senior investigator

The responsibilities of the team leader shall include:

1. Organizing the investigation team upon arrival and making assignments to the other investigators.
2. Meet with the chief or officer in charge of the requesting agency to obtain call information.
3. Oversee the origin and cause investigation. Make sure proper photos, videos, and diagrams are obtained. If possible, interview the owner(s) and witness(es).
4. Make sure evidence is properly packaged and forwarded to the police agency having jurisdiction, including film and videos.
5. Obtain a permission to search form or a search warrant, if necessary.
6. Determine if special equipment is needed and obtain from the officer in charge of the requesting department items such as a pump to remove water from a basement, ladders, etc.
7. Determine if the scene and structure are safe for the team in which to function.
8. If more assistance is needed, call additional investigators or DCI.
9. If there are circumstances that prevent a complete and thorough investigation, notify the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator as soon as possible.
10. Upon completion of the investigation, each investigator should complete a report of his/her observations. All investigators will meet and come to a single decision on the origin and cause. The team leader will then prepare the report detailing the findings of the case. If the fire is in the jurisdiction of the team leader, the report will be sent to that department and a copy will be sent to the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator as soon as possible. If the fire is in the jurisdiction of the Brown County Sheriff's Department, the report will be sent to the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator as soon as possible, and he/she will forward it to the Brown County Sheriff's Department. A copy of the report, if appropriate, and a letter will be sent to the chief of the local fire department within ten (10) days.
11. No Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force investigators will give statements to the press relating to an investigation unless doing so at the direction of the incident commander.

V. SAFETY.

- A. Fire scenes, by their nature, are dangerous places. Fire investigators have a duty to themselves and to others who may be endangered at fire scenes to exercise due caution during their investigations.
- B. Fire scene examination should not be undertaken alone. A minimum of two (2) individuals should be present. If for some reason a second investigator is not available at the scene, assistance will be requested from the fire department having jurisdiction at the scene.
- C. Proper safety equipment should be worn at all times while investigating the scene. If an investigator feels that the atmosphere at the scene is not safe, he/she shall request the fire department to perform a CO reading of the atmosphere and follow up with further ventilation until he/she has determined that it is safe. If all of the investigators at the scene feel it is unsafe, the lead investigator shall notify the fire department chief or the officer in charge that the investigation will be terminated until such time that the scene is safe. The lead investigator should also notify the Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator.
- D. The investigator's task requires that he/she enter structures and often requires that he/she perform tasks of debris removal that may dislodge or weaken these already unsound structures. Before entering such structures or beginning debris removal, the investigator shall make a careful assessment of the stability and safety of the structure. If necessary, the investigator should seek the help of qualified structural experts to assess the need for the removal of dangerously weakened construction or make provisions for supporting load-bearing walls, floors, ceilings, or roofs.
- E. Standing water can provide a variety of dangers to the investigator. Puddles of water can conceal hidden dangers such as holes or other dangerous objects. Investigators must be cognizant of these hidden dangers and take proper precautions to avoid injury. If there is excessive standing water or flooding of a structure, the lead investigator shall request the fire department chief to make arrangements for the removal of the water.

VI. INTERNS.

- A. A list of interns consisting of firefighters and police officers from departments throughout the county shall be approved by the Board of Directors.
- B. The interns must maintain four (4) hours of training yearly to remain on the list. Interns are eligible to attend the arson seminars with expenses paid.

- C. A list of the current interns shall be kept on the back of the response form. When responding on a call, investigators will notify the interns on a rotating basis.
- D. The Brown County Fire Investigation Task Force coordinator will keep records on the call-outs of the interns, and if it appears that any intern is not actively participating, he/she will be contacted about continuing interest as an intern.
- E. The interns are there to learn and assist with the investigation of the fire. They should not be given the "dirty" jobs but should work alongside of the investigator. Some tasks, however, like photography and interviewing, should be done by an investigator while an intern may observe.
- F. The interns will wear the equipment provided by their department.
- G. The interns are expected to follow the same guidelines as the investigators.

VII. COMPENSATION.

- A. Volunteer investigator and intern call-out compensation shall be set by the sheriff upon recommendation of the Board of Directors.

Brown County Safety House Checklist

Call Nick w/any questions 920-362-6652

Prior to moving

- _____ Check the trailer connection—ball, chains, Reese latches, electrical
- _____ Fully raise the jack (make sure to turn power off on trailer and jack)
- _____ Make sure windows and vents are closed and latched (especially escape window)
- _____ Both inside wood doors should be closed and latched
- _____ Nothing on the countertop
- _____ All outside compartments are latched
- _____ Tailgate and all cap windows closed

***When pulling out of station, hitch will hit the apron and then the rear castor wheels will make contact as well. GO SLOW!**

***If using the AC, only use the generator, do not plug into an outlet.**

***There will be a pre- and post-inspection (done by GBFD personnel). Any damages incurred will be your department's responsibility. You can be present at both of these inspections if you choose to be.**

Before returning

- _____ Fill up generator, gas can, and the truck no matter how much fuel was used
- _____ Vacuum all carpet with the vacuum that is in the front right compartment

Name _____ Date Used _____ Event _____

Name of Agency _____ Total # that went through FSH _____

Brown County Safety House Pre- and Post-Check

Pre

_____ Full walk-around looking for dents, scrapes, and damage. Note where, if any, found in comments section

_____ Fuel levels are full

_____ Unit looks clean inside

Comments

GBFD person doing check _____

Date _____

Post

_____ Full walk-around looking for dents, scrapes, and damage. Note where, if any, found in comments section

_____ Fuel levels are full

_____ Unit looks clean inside

_____ Problems occurred during use (list in comments section)

Comments

GBFD person doing check _____

Date _____